

In the Claims

1. (Currently amended.) A cellulosic polymer suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in a solution, the solution containing from about 40 to about 75 weight percent of an alkali formate, wherein the true crystallization temperature (TCT), API 13 J, of the alkali formate solution is less than or equal to 18° F. and further wherein the amount of cellulosic polymer in the polymer suspension is between from about 10 to about 23 weight percent and no more than 25% of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

2. (Original.) The polymer suspension of Claim 1, wherein the cellulosic polymer is anionic or non-ionic.

3. (Previously presented.) The polymer suspension of Claim 2, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of carboxymethylhydroxyethyl cellulose and hydroxyethyl cellulose.

4. (Original.) The polymer suspension of Claim 1, wherein the alkali formate is potassium formate, cesium formate, or a mixture thereof.

5. (Cancelled.)

6. (Cancelled.)

7. (Previously presented.) A cellulosic polymer suspension consisting essentially of a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution, wherein the aqueous salt solution contains 40 weight percent or more of alkali formate, wherein the alkali formate is potassium formate or cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

8. (Previously presented.) The suspension of Claim 7, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

9. (Previously presented.) The suspension of Claim 8, wherein the anionic or nonionic modified cellulose is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

10. (Cancelled.)

11. (Cancelled.)

12. (Previously presented.) A cellulosic polymer suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution containing 40% or more of alkali formate, no more than 25% of the alkali formate being sodium formate, the remainder being

potassium formate, cesium formate, or a mixture thereof and further wherein the amount of cellulosic polymer in the polymer suspension is between from about 10 to about 23 weight percent.

13. (Cancelled.)

14. (Previously presented.) The suspension of Claim 12, where the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

15. (Previously presented.) The suspension of Claim 14, where the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

16. (Cancelled.)

17. (Cancelled.)

18. (Previously presented.) A method for thickening a brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from a subterranean formation which comprises introducing the cellulosic polymer suspension of Claim 12 to the brine to be thickened.

19. (Previously presented.) A method for thickening a brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from a subterranean formation which comprises introducing to the brine to be thickened a suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution, wherein the aqueous salt solution contains 40 weight percent or more of alkali formate and further wherein no more than 25% of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

20. (Cancelled.)

21. (Original.) The method of Claim 18, wherein the brine has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.

22. (Previously presented.) A cellulosic polymer suspension comprising a crosslinked cellulosic polymer suspended at 70° F in 40% or more based on total weight of water and salt of alkali formate dissolved in water, wherein no more than 25% of the alkali formate is sodium formate, the remainder being potassium formate, cesium formate or a mixture thereof.

23. (Previously presented.) The suspension of Claim 22, where the cellulosic polymer is crosslinked with glyoxal.

24. (Previously presented.) A method for thickening brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from a subterranean formation which comprises introducing to the brine to be thickened the cellulosic polymer suspension of Claim 22.

25. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the brine has a density greater than 11.6 ppg.

26. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 25, wherein the brine has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.

27. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

28. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 27, wherein the anionic or nonionic modified cellulose is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

29. (Previously presented.) The cellulosic polymer suspension of Claim 7, further comprising a suspension stabilizer.

30. (Previously presented.) A method for thickening brine during the recovery of oil and/or gas from a subterranean formation which comprises introducing to the brine to be thickened a suspension comprising a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous alkali formate solution.

31. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is greater than 40 weight percent.

32. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the amount of alkali formate in the suspension is between from about 40 to about 75 weight percent.

33. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the brine has a density greater than or equal to 11.6 ppg at 70°F.

34. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 33, wherein the brine has a density between from 11.6 to 14.2 ppg.

35. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the cellulosic polymer is selected from the group consisting of anionic and nonionic modified cellulose.

36. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 35, wherein the anionic or nonionic modified cellulose is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyethylcellulose and carboxymethyl hydroxyethylcellulose.

37. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 18, wherein the brine to be thickened is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

38. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 19, wherein the brine to be thickened is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

39. (Previously presented.) The method of Claim 30, wherein the brine to be thickened is selected from the group consisting of brines of calcium chloride, calcium bromide, zinc bromide and mixtures thereof.

40. (New.) A cellulosic polymer suspension consisting essentially of a cellulosic polymer suspended in an aqueous salt solution, wherein the aqueous salt solution contains 40 weight percent or more of an alkali formate selected from the group consisting of potassium formate, cesium formate and mixtures thereof and further wherein the amount of cellulosic polymer in the suspension is between from about 10 to about 23 weight percent.